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**Title:**

Press release - Festival Hall

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RELEASE BY THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, HON. DON DUNSTAN, Q.C., M.P.  
4.8.69.

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FESTIVAL HALL.

The report of Mr. DeGaetani, obtained at the request of the Lord Mayor's Cultural Committee showed very clearly that in expending public money for any facility for the performing arts in South Australia, the first thing we had to determine was what functions we needed buildings for.

It has been constantly pointed out that vast sums of money in Australia have been wasted in putting up buildings which do not get maximum use and which are not designed effectively for a specific developing demand. The building should not be merely a decoration to the city, an additional fountain, but something that will be used to the full.

After studying the needs of the performing arts in South Australia in close detail, Mr. DeGaetani said that we needed a number of interlocking facilities and that the provision of any of them without the others would mean an unsuccessful venture. The first thing we needed was a home - permanent home - for a South Australian Theatre Company, an adequately planned theatre with a seating capacity of about 700. Associated with this we needed a multi-purpose hall for concerts, ballet, opera and large-scale musical comedy production and also capable of use for very large-scale theatre productions which could occasionally be staged. We also needed an uncommitted experimental space capable of use for theatre in the round, various forms of experimental theatre, for chamber music, concerts and exhibitions, and he pointed out that the building should be in close association with the tertiary education institutions on North Terrace and seek maximum involvement of the students in the

day to day working of the Centre. If these facilities are not provided and we simply put up a concert hall or a multi-purpose hall, we will not get maximum use of the building and it will simply be for the performing arts a larger scale version of Her Majesty's Theatre which, as most people know, is very often dark and without a production going on.

A large-scale multi-purpose Hall will be of assistance to a symphony orchestra, but will do nothing for the encouragement of the local companies engaged in the performing arts.

Sir Robert Helpmann has pointed again and again to the necessity for the Festival to be the culmination of the artistic life of the community in South Australia including the performing arts and not simply a series of visits by artists from outside South Australia producing what Mr. DeGaetani called a "fortnight's cultural oasis in what is otherwise a cultural desert."

The building, therefore, has to provide for local companies and the proposed building does not do this. The alarming feature of the plan is that it is not an open-end plan, that is there is no provision for future development of the necessary facilities for local companies. We are simply to spend money on a decoration which will be useful occasionally but which cannot get maximum use.

The other alarming feature of the present proposals is that they have been published before the working drawings are completed. We have no indications as to cost. We have no more information as to design than the New South Wales Government had in relation to the Sydney Opera House. We should not commit ourselves until we are certain what sort of costs are going to be involved.

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